

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Intelligence

SUBJECT : Comments on National Intelligence Officers

General

1. Based on my experience with both SAVA and SALT, I believe the proposed NIO concept has merit, and can be made to work. The addition of the NIE responsibility to such staff operations, however, poses a significant additional burden which will surely require multiple staff assistants for those NIO's whose menus are relatively full. Both the SAVA and SALT functions kept a number of people busy enough during critical periods without direct involvement in NIE's and SNIE's. Although SAVA was grossly overstaffed and involved a number of people in marginally useful activities, it could legitimately have kept four or five officers fully occupied.

NIO Staffs

2. As I see it, there are four major tasks an NIO would have to perform: (a) monitor rather comprehensively the substantive take and the intelligence produced on his area; (b) keep abreast of--and participate in--relevant policy considerations and deliberations; (c) monitor related intelligence collection activities and other operations; and (d) see that things get done in these first three tasks in support of the DCI's responsibilities. To do them effectively in most cases would require at least one officer specializing in--and focussing on--each of the first three tasks, with all three turning to the fourth task as necessary. While two officers might suffice in quiet areas (Latin America), four or more might be required on high interest areas where many papers are required by consumers. Minimum staffing would appear to be: the NIO, a principal substantive assistant, and a collection/operations assistant who would also have considerable area expertise. Such a threesome could be expected to stay on top of all but the most active areas. The NIO for Strategic Weapons (SALT) might require substantive experts on both technical and forces matters, and a third one on political matters when negotiations are developing or are in process. Other busy NIO's may need similar augmentation, but staffing much beyond these levels could create a potential for duplication and make-work activity which would be detrimental to effective operation.

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Safeguarding Objectivity

3. The inclusion of the NIE function in the responsibilities of the NIO is, of course, a radical departure from past Agency alignments. Theoretically, such a step should be beneficial in the current NSC support milieu by sharpening the focus and relevance of the estimate to policy consumers. I see one drawback in this arrangement, however, in terms of the potential loss of objectivity at the hub of the estimative process. The relative independence of the ONE machinery from direct operational and policy planning activity had some merit in this regard. The necessarily close working relationship of the NIO apparatus with policy-making entities almost certainly will introduce policy-oriented biases into the analytical process, human nature being what it is. Although the impact of this will be tempered in the formal coordination process associated with national estimates, it could pose real problems in papers where the coordination process is less highly structured. The potential for difficulty will vary with each NIO, but will nevertheless exist. To guard against this, and to uphold the Agency's--if not the community's--reputation for objectivity, the Director should be made aware of the potential problem, and should ensure that avenues for appeal of the NIO's judgments and actions are available as appropriate.

Why an Economic Intelligence NIO?

4. I question the need for an NIO to deal with Economic Intelligence. An Economic Intelligence NIO would in effect be overseeing only OER's activities, and hence seems to be an unnecessary additional bureaucratic layer. NIO positions are justifiable only when extensive coordination of internal and external resources are required. These responsibilities could well be vested in a senior officer resident in OER, with perhaps a staff assistant to monitor collection and operation matters.

Potential for Jurisdictional Rivalries

5. Some deliniation of responsibilities will be necessary to avoid jurisdictional rivalries between the regional and functional NIO's. Presumably the regional NIO's would focus primarily on political matters, with the functional NIO's being charged with clear responsibilities in their respective functional areas. The senior NIO probably should be charged with overseeing necessary coordination and cooperation between the regional and functional NIO's to ensure that all appropriate bases are touched and that nothing falls through the cracks.

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Strategic Weapons (SALT)

6. I presume the NIO for Strategic Weapons (SALT) would assume the role of the existing SA/SAL. This functional break-out makes sense because of the need to coordinate DDI/OSR activities with those of DDS&T/OSWA, and because other community elements have an interest in SALT matters. Most SALT-related actions have, of course, been handled within the Agency, and probably should continue to be so handled because of the bureaucratic problems associated with Verification Panel work.

Additional NIO's for Collection?

7. Consideration should be given to using the NIO concept to handle functions now performed by USIB committees, such as COMIREX, GMAIC, CCPC, etc. The GMAIC function might be combined with the Strategic Weapons (SALT) NIO, or at least he could serve as Chairman of GMAIC and utilize that body as one of his "panels of experts". An NIO for reconnaissance could be established to provide a suitable peg-point for the COMIREX function. Or an overall NIO for Collection could be established, with assistants for overhead reconnaissance, SIGINT, and HUMINT. A Collection NIO would be in a position to advise the other NIO's on collection matters, as well as coordinating and overseeing collection activities on an all-source, community-wide basis.

USIB Representation

8. While recognizing the Director's desire for staffing NIO positions on a community basis, selections should be based primarily on demonstrated professional competence in the intelligence business. Unless the military services or other community components put forth candidates clearly equal to or superior in professional experience or competence to available CIA candidates, then CIA officers should be given preference. The NIO positions should not be staffed by amateurs or otherwise inexperienced personnel. Moreover, the fact that a major part of NIO actions will oversee internal CIA activities strengthens the desirability of giving preference to CIA candidates for the senior positions. Community representation would seem most appropriate at the staff assistant level in all instances, unless the credentials of candidates from other agencies are clearly superior.

NIO Candidates

9. With regard to specific positions, Howard Stoertz seems the most logical candidate for the Strategic Weapons (SALT) position. Although

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Bruce Clarke has appropriate credentials for the General Purpose Forces (MBFR) position, he probably is more useful in his OSR role. [redacted] could fill that position adequately. I have no particular suggestions for the other senior NIO positions. I would note that IAS should be regarded as a potential source for substantive staff assistants in both the Strategic Weapons and General Purpose Forces areas, as well as in collection and operation matters. [redacted] could perform credibly in the Strategic Weapons areas, and [redacted] would be candidates for similar positions in the Ground Forces areas. Any of these, plus [redacted] and [redacted] could play a useful role in reconnaissance and collection matters.

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